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## **Federal Partners Bring Focus to California Bay-Delta Water Conservation and Recycling**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- Leaders from five Federal agencies hosted a roundtable meeting today with California state officials and key regional stakeholders in an ongoing effort to align water conservation and recycling programs to help reduce water demand on the California Bay-Delta.

The partners attending today's Water Conservation and Recycling Roundtable agreed to continue its work in a public meeting to be held later this summer. The Department of the Interior and its Bureau of Reclamation co-hosted the event with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of the Army, and the President's Council on Environmental Quality.

"Today's roundtable is just one step in our ongoing mission to find long-term solutions to meet California's water supply and environmental challenges," said Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Michael L. Connor. "The Bay-Delta is the lifeblood of this region and addressing its current and future challenges is our top priority. We are taking a number of actions simultaneously to increase water conservation and recycling efforts. Today, we have committed with our partners to continue this dialogue well into the future."

"Protecting and restoring the Bay-Delta region is essential to the health and prosperity of California families and businesses," said Pete Silva, EPA's assistant administrator for the Office of Water. "Bringing together our state and federal partners is an important step towards cleaner, safer water for everyone and shows the value this administration puts on collaboration. Our work together begins at this roundtable."

"The Army Corps of Engineers has a long history of working in the Bay-Delta area. We are encouraged by the level of commitment being brought to the table by all of the federal and state partners," said Ms. Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army Civil Works. "We will help find long-term solutions to the water resources' needs of these communities by applying our scientific and engineering expertise."

"These talks represent a water supply and distribution system that is as vital as it is complicated," said Dave White, Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service. "I look forward to listening and learning more about the situation to see what role our programs such as EQIP can continue to play in water conservation and water quality improvements."

Today's roundtable meeting on water conservation and recycling fulfills a requirement of the Interim Federal Action Plan introduced in 2009 by the Obama Administration. The plan encourages smarter supply and use of Bay-Delta water by intensifying and aligning Federal water conservation and recycling efforts with those of the State of California and impacted communities, while supporting water efficiency and conservation in agriculture.

The goals of the Interim Federal Action plan are to:

- Strengthen Federal coordination of actions with the state –especially its commitment to more fully engage federal agencies in the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan, the most significant effort currently underway to address critical long-term water issues in California.
- Help meet water needs through actions that promote smarter water supply and use such as constructing projects that increase flexibility in the water supply system, enhancing water transfers, ensuring that the best science is applied to water supply decisions, and intensifying and aligning Federal water conservation efforts with those of the state
- Help ensure healthy ecosystems and improved water quality through independent reviews of key scientific questions, including a review of all factors that are contributing to the decline of the Bay-Delta ecosystem, investigation and mitigation of other stressors affecting water quality in the Bay-Delta and impacts to its imperiled species, advancing ecosystem restoration projects, including near-term habitat projects in the Bay-Delta, accelerating the restoration and propagation of Delta smelt and other aquatic species, continuing construction of fish screens, and addressing climate change impacts on the Bay-Delta.
- Call for agencies to help deliver drought relief services and ensure integrated flood risk management, including the prioritization of projects and activities for flood risk management and related levee stabilization projects and navigation.

Details on the Water Conservation and Recycling Roundtable and future meetings can be found at <http://www.usbr.gov/mp/pa/h2ogoals>.

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